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ABSTRACT

The case study of a 5-year-old Taiwanese child, newly arrived in the United States with no English skills, focuses on the effect that parent and teacher expectations have on the child's acquisition of English literacy skills. Data were gathered in home and classroom visits, in formal and semi-structured interviews, and from samples of the child's writing and drawing. Field notes were analyzed for patterns and strategies used in written and oral English. Audio recordings were reviewed for literacy events. Interviews were reviewed for evidence of parent and teacher expectations and concerns. Writing and drawing samples were examined for understanding of the child's attempts at English writing. Data were categorized as expectations, strategies, and English literacy skills. Analyses are presented in this report. Results support the theory that children learn a second language through many authentic, purposeful, and meaningful language experiences, and that the child's understanding and use of a second language are influenced by their unique cultural characteristics and through varied social interaction with significant others. It was found that teacher and parent expectations and beliefs were dissonant, and suggested that clear and direct communication of educational goals from the outset would better serve the child's language development. (MSE)

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# Learning a Second Language: A Case Study of a Taiwanese Child

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## Introduction

Current studies in children's second language acquisition have either looked at achievement and adjustment or bilingualism. Most studies about Asian children have looked at their educational achievement and adjustment (Flynn, 1991; Goleman, 1990; Siu, 1992; Sue, 1990; Uttal, 1988); a few studies have focused on Asian children's interaction patterns in American schools (Essary et al. 1993, Guthrie, 1985). However, no study is found in existing literature which exclusively examines Asian children's English literacy behaviors, and how teachers' and parents' expectations and concerns affect their language development in both first and second languages. In particular, such a study might help teachers to assess both their children who speak English as a second language and their own existing practice in new ways (Wallace & Goodman, 1989). Since there are over seven million Asian-Americans in the United States (Li and Liu, 1993), such knowledge may provide a broader understanding of bilingualism and guidelines for teachers, parents, and educators to work with Asian children and assist them in the process of learning both languages more effectively. In particular, such knowledge will supplement the existing literature of the study of language learning of the culturally and linguistically diverse student populations in the United States.

## Rationale

Children learn a language within a social context. As they learn a language, they also learn to be a social member within a culture. Keesing (1975) argued that human language is like a mirror which reflects the speaker's cultural background. To gain an in-depth understanding, therefore, the research should look at not only linguistic perspectives but also sociocultural perspectives. Indeed, many linguists and sociolinguists have emphasized the interconnections between culture and language (Chen, 1988; Goodenough, 1981; Halliday, 1977; Hernandez, 1993; Jones, 1979; Ochs, 1988).

Vygotsky (1978) indicates that children's interaction between people, especially between adults, peers, and significant others, is essential for learning and development. Within the process of interaction, language serves as a mediational tool for the development of higher mental functions (Wertsch, 1985). Children's interaction with others also helps them to modify their egocentric view of the world. Particularly, social interaction among peers is an effective stimulant to their processes of constructing knowledge (Kamii and Randazzo, 1985). Other studies also emphasize the importance of sociocultural aspects and social interaction in children's language learning and development (Crago, 1992; Edelsky, 1986; Fields, Spangler, and Lee, 1991; Hernandez, 1993; Johnson, 1988; Teale, 1986; Wieder and Greenspan, 1993).

Consistent with Vygotsky's notion of social histories, Ochs (1988) maintains that since activities, objects, and relations are represented by adults and children through language, the interpretation and meaning of language will be embedded in a cultural system of understanding. Halliday (1977) states:

> The child's task is to construct the system of meanings that represents his own model of social reality. This process takes place inside his own head; it is a cognitive process. But it takes place in contexts of social interaction, and there is no way it can take place except in these contexts. . . The act of meaning is a social act (pp. 139-140).

Delgado-Gaitan (1990) views literacy as a sociocultural process. To make learning meaningful, the individual needs to understand the context surrounding the written text which is a part of the larger sociocultural system. Theorists have claimed that children learn best in contexts in which language is culturally and linguistically meaningful (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985).

In examining factors which affect the learning of English by Chinese children in British schools, Jones (1979) suggests that researchers should look both at children's educational needs and their cultural background. Goodenough (1981) stresses this view by saying that children learn cultural forms by observing adults' verbal and nonverbal interactions. Cook-Gumperz (1986) also suggests that, while examining children's

language acquisition, researchers should also look at how children become social members of a society. Such studies suggest that children's language development and their position within the family closely relate to each other. More often, children may learn more from siblings or peers rather than from their parents (Ward, 1971).

Whether studying children's first or second language acquisition from sociolinguistic or sociocultural perspectives, researchers point out that most studies have focused on Western, middle class societies (Cook, 1976; Corsaro & Streeck, 1986). For this reason, they also express the need for more cross-cultural studies, especially for studies that focus on children from non-Western countries. Corsaro and Streeck (1986) suggest that "the sparse findings from cross-cultural research seem to indicate that there is much variation in patterns of interacting with children as there is in other aspects of culture" (p. 30).

Similarly, Hung and Tzeng (1984) have stressed that more cross-language and cross-writing system studies be done to assist bilingual children who are taught in an orthography other than English.

Moreover, instead of looking at the impact of different contexts and domains in which children learn literacy skills, most studies of children's literacy have concentrated primarily on one single setting, usually the school. However, with the emerging focus on home literacy, the literacy behaviors in the home setting have attracted the attention of researchers (Heath, 1983; Teale, 1986). Many studies in children's literacy have demonstrated the importance of home literacy in children's overall literacy development as well as school success (Clay, 1987; Wells, 1987; Yao, 1983).

Most studies regarding children's language learning have focused on English-speaking families (Chall & Snow, 1982; Epstein, 1986; Heath, 1983). Only recently have language minority children's learning of English literacy skills in the home setting been addressed. Thus, educators and researchers began to look at the strengths of the home

literacy environments of language minority students (Clay, 1987; Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Hudelson, 1981-1982, 1984, 1989a, 1989b; Taylor, 1983). These studies viewed culture and language as being closely related and playing important roles in supporting and influencing children's language learning (Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Goodman, 1986; Heath, 1983; Taylor & Gaines, 1988).

In addition, such studies have challenged the assumptions that minority and immigrant parents are deficient in that their homes are "literacy impoverished" (Auerbach, 1989, p. 169; Edelsky, 1986). These researchers suggest that teachers and educators should view families as educators and argue that these families, having rich social contexts, have enhanced rather than hindered their children's language learning. In summary, the above studies show that to have a knowledgeable understanding of children's literacy learning experience, an in-depth examination of interactions between children and adults in the classroom and home environment become particularly important.

This study is guided by the sociocultural framework and the theoretical assumptions that children learn a second language through many first- and second- language experiences; their understanding and use of a second language are affected by their unique cultural background and through various social interactions.

## Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher's and parents' expectations and concerns affect a Taiwanese kindergarten child's language development in English. The research problem is operationalized as the following question: how do teacher's and parents' expectations and concerns related to the English language development of a Taiwanese child affect the child's English language development?

### Definitions of Key Terms

*ESL Children* are children who speak English as their second language. They live in an English speaking environment and community, but are immersed in English, mainly through schools. ESL children are in the continuous process of becoming bilingual, e.g., becoming proficient in both first and second languages.

*Whole language* describes an approach to reading instruction characterized by the following classroom practices: making children the central focus; listening to literature; reading and writing daily for various purposes; and learning as active participant; and communicating with peers and adults in a meaningful and relaxed context. The four language modes (i.e., speaking, listening, writing, and reading) are integrated and taught as a whole.

## Methodology

### Subjects

The subjects in the study were a five-year-old Taiwanese boy (Jim, pseudonym used to protect the privacy of the child and to be consistent with the fact that an American name has been used in the classroom), his parents, and the classroom teacher. Jim had been in the United States for one semester when the study began. He knew no English at the time he arrived in this country. His father is a doctoral student at the University; his mother has been taking courses at the University but is not officially enrolled. The family resides in the Student Family Housing (the Smiths, pseudonym used to replace the real names of the parents).

The teacher has been teaching in kindergarten and preschool for more than ten years. Before she had Jim in her class, she had experienced teaching other children whose first languages were languages other than English (Ms. Jones, pseudonym used to replace the real name of the teacher).

## Design

This study utilized an exploratory case study design (Yin, 1989). The researcher used several ethnographic techniques to examine how a five-year-old Taiwanese boy learns English. These techniques are detailed below in Data Collection.

The use of case studies in educational research has become increasingly important (Wilson & Gudmundsdottir, 1987). Bogdan and Biklen (1982) define a case as "a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event" (p. 58). Case studies are appropriate when process questions such as "how" and "why" are asked. Such studies focus on a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and when the researcher has little control over events (Yin, 1989). One of the unique strengths of the case study is its ability to use multiple sources of evidence to gain an in-depth understanding of an on-going phenomenon (Yin, 1989).

Case study is appropriate for this study because (1) children's language learning and acquisition is an on-going and complicated phenomenon in which the events are unpredictable and uncontrollable; (2) this case study may represent a significant contribution to knowledge in children's second language learning and acquisition.

## Procedure

At the beginning of January, 1994, the parents were contacted by phone to explain the nature and the purpose of the study and to obtain permission for their child's serving as a participant in this study. At the same time, the Parent Consent Form (see appendix A) was sent to them via their child from school. Home visits were scheduled according to the parents' convenience. No audio recording was made without prior consent from the parents and the teacher. The data were collected from the second week of January through the second week of May, 1994. The preliminary analysis of each interview and observation notes began during and after the data collection and analysis.

**Data Collection**

This study utilized several ethnographic techniques including participant observation in the classroom and household which were recorded as field notes. Biweekly informal and semi-structured interviews were conducted. A portion of the child's writing and drawing samples were also collected. The use of multiple sources of evidence enhances the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 1989).

The child's literacy behavior in the classroom and the home settings was observed for four months, from the beginning of the second week of January through the end of the second week of May, 1994. School visits were made once each week. Most of the time was spent observing the classroom literacy activities such as reading, writing, and orality surrounding literacy events, since these were the only situations in which Jim was totally emersed in English. Each classroom observation lasted for thirty minutes to one hour. Biweekly home visits were one hour per visit for over sixteen weeks (see Appendix B for the researcher's work schedule). These interviews were semi-structured and tape recorded (see Appendix C for a list of interview questions). All informal interviews with the child and teacher were conducted during participant observations and were transcribed into the researcher' observation field notes.

To obtain reliable interview information, all interviews were audio-tape recorded and transcribed into expanded field notes within 24 hours of the observation (Fetterman, 1989). the interviews with the parents were conducted in their native language (Chinese) in their home or at school and then translated and transcribed into English by the researcher. It is recommended that, in ethnographic studies, the subjects should be interviewed in their native language (Spradley, 1980). All of the interviews with the parents and Jim were conducted in Chinese, the subjects' native language. However, due to the differences in the language structures and usage in Chinese and English, the researcher was often caught in situations when there was not an appropriate word in English. In this case, other words

that captured the meaning were used. A portion of the child's writing and drawing samples were collected in the field.

### Data Analysis

The following procedures were used to analyze the research question: field notes were content analyzed for patterns and different strategies related to the use of written and oral English. Audio recordings were also content analyzed for specific literacy events. A list of interview questions formulated by the researcher were used to elicit information about the parents' and the teachers' expectations of and concerns for the child's English language development. The information gathered in the broad and open-ended interview questions (see Appendix C, Figure A) were used for guiding the first level analysis and the formulation of the more structured interview questions (see Appendix C, Figure B). The child's writing and drawing samples were collected and analyzed for understanding his attempts in English writing. Data were categorized into three major domains: expectations, strategies, and the child's English literacy skills. To protect the anonymity of the subjects, pseudonyms were used to replace the subjects' real names.

## Findings

Analysis of the findings took several forms: description of the settings in which Jim acquires English, analysis of observations and interviews for patterns, and the analysis of Jim's English acquisition through his writings, drawings, oral, and receptive English abilities.

### The Settings

This study was conducted in a University Lab School that serves as an early childhood research institute for a mid-south University. There are seven early childhood education models serving children of different ages and needs. These programs include

Parent-Infant, Toddler; Developmental Preschool; Montessori; Kindergarten; Extended Care; Special Education/Mainstream; and Project Memphis Early Intervention for handicapped infants and toddlers. A total of 96 children are enrolled in the school in the school year of 1994. The subject was enrolled in the Kindergarten class.

*The Classroom*

As soon as I walked into Ms. Jones's classroom, I noted at least three bookcases full of books of many types available for the children in the kindergarten to read and take home. One bookcase was filled with typical children's books that one might find in any classroom. The other bookcases contained additional children's literature as well as content specific books on such things as space and dinosaurs which were available as support material for the teacher's reading curriculum (Hsu and Casey, 1994). Besides, children's art projects, children-made books and journals are everywhere in the room. Good quality and award-winning children's big books, regular children's books, references, newspapers, magazines, labels, mail box, etc indicate that this is a print-rich, whole language oriented classroom.

Ms. Jones used thematic units and integrated curriculum to support literacy learning. During the period of the study, the students covered "Space" and "Dinosaurs." Ms. Jones also provides audio cassettes which are used in "tape reports" where students read a book along with an audio cassette and then do a drawing/writing exercise in which they summarize important aspects of the story. The walls were covered with writing and drawing samples, posters, language experience stories and other printed material. Objects in the classroom are labeled with index cards. The materials in the reading and writing center change frequently with the theme.

*The Home*

I was warmly greeted by Ms. Smith for every home visit. She usually served me dessert and beverage soon after I arrived. During the time we were having dessert

together, she would ask me what did I plan to do on that specific visit. If it was scheduled to have an interview with her, she would ask her two children to go upstairs to study or read or watch TV. Other times, I simply observed and interacted with Jim when he asked me to do several activities with him.

When I first arrived at their home, I have noticed an abundance of literacy artifacts, both in English and in Chinese. Copies of *The Central Daily Newspaper,* complimentary copies from the Taiwanese Government, were usually spread over the table; whereas copies of *The Commercial Appeal*, wrapped in plastic, were piled up high against the door. Maybe the parents had found no time to read the American newspaper. On the upper book shelf in the living room, there were parents' and children's books. Jim's writing and drawing works from school were piled on the lower shelf. The parents' books and references include *Finance and Investment*, *Time*, *A Dictionary of American Idioms*, *The Bible*, *Encyclopedia*, *English Grammar*, TOEFL Notebooks, History, and several *Chinese Recipe Books*. There were a bunch of children's books in math, science, art, games, and folktales in Chinese. Above the book shelf were several family pictures which were made in Taiwan.

Realizing my interest in the books their child read, Ms. Smith led me upstairs to Jim's room which he shared with his brother. A queen-sized bed, a big desk, and two book shelves have almost occupied all the space in the room. Jim was very exited to show me each of his books. He had a collection of Dr. Seuss and Walt Disney books. His mother bought them from a book store. Other books which she had ordered from the school included *The Dragons are Singing Tonight*, *Bears on Wheels*, *Are You My Mother*, *Amazing Grace*, *Alphabetic*, *May I Bring a Friend*, *Noah's Ark*, *The Fox*, *The Bremen Town Musicians*, *I Went Walking*, *No Jumping on the Bed*, *The Tiny Seed*, and *The Night is Coming*. On the top of the book shelf, there were four boxes of picture cards, and other English word games.

There was TV, which Jim watched for half an hour daily. *Sesame Street* was the program he had been watching most of the time. I asked him whether it was his favorite TV program and he said "no." He watched it because his mom wanted him to. Every time he watched the program for thirty minutes or so, his mom would put a star on the rewarding list (see Appendix F). He may have a reward when all of the slots on the sheet are filled out. On the other hand, Jim's mother explained that *Sesame Street* might help Jim to pick up English since many English letters were taught in interesting ways. Jim's favorite thing to do at home is to play "Super Mario." He always wanted me to see how well he could play the game.

The literacy works which Jim had brought home from school provided the most important sources of his understanding and displaying of his English language learning. These literacy works included drawings and books he had made in thematic units. In addition, Jim went to Sunday School class where he sang, drew, and listened to Bible stories.

**Expectations and Concerns**

On the basis of observations and interview notes, the data were categorized into three major domains: expectations/concerns, strategies, and Jim's English literacy skills. Expectations and concerns deal primarily with the values and beliefs held by the subjects of interest regarding the English acquisition of the child. Strategies deal with the formulation and implementation of particular goal-centered activity (Hsu and Casey, 1994).

*Ms. Jones's Expectations and Concerns*

Ms. Jones expressed that she felt that preparing children for the first grade was a very important part of her job as a kindergarten teacher. She particularly saw that moving children toward a higher level of thinking is important. She felt that this represents a bigger obstacle for the child than the other children in the class.

That's the big difference between kindergarten and other pre-school, you take children and kind (of) make them leap to the abstract. Make them follow directions without pictures. Take them from the concrete to the abstract. It's even more difficult in Jim's case where he doesn't have the language to back him up on it, so, I think those are the things you're going to see the greatest difficulty with . . . (JCTI, 3-11-94).

However, Ms. Jones also felt that Jim is progressing at a steady pace in a general academic sense. She explains that she tries to balance Jim's special needs with his need to experience the same curriculum that all of the other children are receiving.

He [Jim] gets all the things the other kids get and there are other things that he gets on a one-to-one basis. When you talk to him about whatever you're talking about we use a lot of objects, we use a lot of pictures and stuff. If he was doing some work with some other children at Halloween and needed to draw something about a cat or a bat where I say it to them (points to other children) he might have illustrations of a cat or a bat, so he has the vocabulary, a lot of pictorial clues, we do a lot of things in the morning with him where we pair him up with other children for a lot of time to do that activity. This time of year, he's more adept at doing those things on his own so we do a lot of one-to-one tutoring, discuss things with his parents about doing more reading to him (JCTI, 3-11-94).

In several interviews, Ms. Jones repeatedly stated her belief that Jim's English language development may be slowed by the fact that English is not spoken at home. Consider the following interview segments:

He [Jim] doesn't speak any English at home, his mother barely speaks any English, So, the only place he really gets it is what he gets in here and based on that he had a lot of things to overcome. He had a language barrier, he had a cultural barrier, a lot of children in here knew each other--he didn't know anyone, he couldn't say anything, he didn't speak anything (JCTI, 3-11-94).

I [Ms. Jones] also didn't think he was getting a lot of support for it [English] at home. I think that his mother doesn't speak comfortably in English, and I think that most of his family life did not stress a lot of that (YHTI, 3-24-94).

Since he's not getting a whole lot of English at home, he's getting most of it here, it's going to be a longer term thing for him to develop that [English] (YHTI, 3-24-94).

Ms. Jones also suggested the Smiths to help Jim develop English skills by giving English values:

. . . the biggest way they can do is to give English value. I think children will learn anything from their parents if they think that it's important to their parents until they are teenagers then if it's important to

> them, they will try not to learn it. But I think that if parents feel that English is important, then their children will feel like that it's important, and that parents can influence that by using English. If English is difficult for them to use, then there are other ways, they can talk about the values, they can get their children books and tapes. [Jim's] mother did not speak a lot of English, she does not use a lot of English. But she was really aware enough of how important it is for [Jim] that she always bought him lots of English books and lots of English tapes where he can listen to it, even if she couldn't read it, and that he could. So I think that was very influential to him that English is welcome in his house (YHTI, 4-19-94).

However, when questioned specifically about English language development, the teacher stated that Jim has progressed at a normal pace considering where he started this year.

> He's [Jim] learned to read English words and write English words pretty well at the same time as a lot of these children did even though he didn't speak the language as his first language. Actually he can do a lot of sounds and recognize a lot of letters and sounds better than some of the other children which is a good reflection on his skills and his ability (JCTI, 3-11-94).

> . . . at this point of time, I think he's understanding almost everything I have to say. He listened to a story now which he couldn't able to do before and he's able to speak in sentences even if the structure isn't always grammatically correct (YHTI, 3-24-94).

In many instances, the teacher refers to the development of the child's social skills and his social integration into the class. She frequently expressed her wish that Jim would eventually feel comfortable with English and work and communicate with other children.

> If his academics were going to be wonderful, what I was most concerned with was that [the Smiths] are going to be in this country for a couple of years, was that he [Jim] felt comfortable in a setting with English speaking children, that he got enough English to enable him to feel comfortable as he went on into the first grade where academics would get to be more important, that's what I express to them [the Smiths] . . . that's what the main focus of the year would be, on working with communicating with [Jim] and him being able to feel comfortable with the language (YHTI, 3-24-94).

Ms. Jones also referred to what she sees as signs of Jim's progress in using English in socialization. "At first the language was such a barrier but now he [Jim] will be the recipient of offers of friendship as well as initiating it. A very complementary process. He now has more reasons to include others in what he is doing and to be included" (JCTI,

3-11-94). She also related in interview that she is beginning to see some overt signs of better language usage in class.

> *Ms. Jones:* . . . I can tell that Jim is acclimating better because his behavior has taken a real downturn and that pretty well happens when you start to fit in and socialize with the other children and the more interactions, the better his language is."
>
> *Interviewer*: "So you're observing more socialization with the others and more misbehavior?"
>
> *Ms. Jones:* "Oh, sure! (laughs) Which you didn't observe at the beginning of the year when he [Jim] had so little language. He was very solitary because when you can't communicate like that with children this age, a lot of their interactions are verbal and he had problems with that. He has many more interactions. He initiates more interactions and also, the other children want to play with him more because they can understand what he is saying" (JCTI, 3-11-94).
>
> He can joke in English, he can play around, he feel comfortable using it, he teases me in English, he's reading (YHTI, 5-4-94).

Ms. Jones expressed a number of beliefs regarding Jim's English language development. Her expectations generally followed one of three paths: Jim's general academic development, Jim's language proficiency, and social well-being. She seemed to feel that Jim is doing well in adjustment in all three areas but expressed some concerns regarding disadvantages he might face as a result of language-use issues in the home (Hsu and Casey. 1994).

*The Smiths' Expectations*

The Smiths's general expectations of Jim are that they want him "to be happy, to like school, to interact with other chidren and teachers frequently," to be "respected by other children, and to be educated" (YHPI, 1-26,94). The Smiths told their child that "spending more time working on building your knowledge base now is one key to your future success. No pains, no gains. . . . We expect our children to learn and will provide support for them if they can make it through whatever degree they can" (YHPI, 3-14-94). Even though the parents said that they did not expect Jim to know certain things at school, they also said that "kindergarten should be a good preparation for the first grade. If he [Jim] does well in the first grade that will tell us how much and how well he has learned in

kindergarten" (YHPI, 3-2-94). This emphasis on their children's educational success is consistent with the Chinese cultural value on productive work and educational achievement (Li & Liu, 1993; Smith, 1989, 1990, 1992; Sue & Okazaki, 1990; Tsui, 1989; Wong, 1988). To encourage their child to spend more time engaging in reading and writing English, the parents had cut down Jim's outside play time. This has verified the findings that Chinese are less likely to perceive extracurricular activities such as play and sports as ways of learning (Siu, 1992; Yao, 1988).

To help their child to acquire English in a shorter time, the parents have been asking the teacher the possibility of assigning an individual tutor to their child.

> We showed our concern regarding [Jim's] limited English ability to the teacher and asked her the possibility of applying additional instructional resources; however, she [Ms. Jones] had a different view. She said that the child "is doing fine"; he "understands much English," and so he did not need additional instruction (YHPI, 4-27-94).

In responding to Ms. Jones's suggestion of speaking English at home to help develop Jim's English skills, the Smiths did not consider this as a good suggestion, Ms. Smith said:

> We used to think that [Jim] would learn English better from American teachers at school because English is not our first language. We make mistakes or our pronunciations are not correct, and we feel hesitant to speak to them in English since we do not know if we say it correctly. . . . Besides, we used to speak Chinese at home. It would seem awkward to speak to them [children] in English. More importantly, English is not our first language. . . . How can we possibly educate our children in a language in which we do not even have confidence? The result would be negative. The teacher simply was not aware of cultural and language difference. We can educate our children's behaviors, logical thinking, but not language [a second language] (YHPI, 4-15-94).

The parents' expectations in Jim's English learning parallel the findings in Cox Report (1988) that parents of ethnic minority children usually expect the education system to provide their children a good command of English as rapidly as possible.

When asked to compare Jim's prior school experience in Taiwan to the school he attends in the United States, Ms. Smith pointed out:

> The day care center [Jim] attended in Taiwan is also a University Lab school. Both schools have some things in common: respecting the children,

> encouraging their creativity, and fostering critical thinking skills. The day care center which [Jim] attended in Taiwan especially reinforced children's learning achievement. There is a very harmonious atmosphere between teachers, parents, and children in that school. Both schools have similar ways of teaching children; even the classroom arrangements are similar. The one in Taiwan also has a reading corner, play corner, science corner, etc. Children are engaged in many different activities and are free to make choices to go to different corners (YHPI, 3-14-94).

The above description implies that the two schools in which Jim attends have similar approaches in teaching and educating children.

Through several interviews with the parents and home visits, it has become evident that similarities and differences exist in the parents' and the teacher's expectations about Jim's English language learning. The parents expect Jim to be happy, to like school, to interact with other children and teachers, to be respected by other children, and to be educated. On the other hand, they also sought ways to help their children to learn better, to achieve English proficiency in a shorter time and to succeed academically. For example, they spent much time reading stories with Jim; they assigned extra homework to Jim to practice writing, coping, and memorizing letters; and they told Jim the importance of going to school and being educated. However, due to their limited English vocabularies, they felt that their help was "limited."

*The Smiths' concerns*

The Smiths have expressed several concerns. Consider the following interview segments:

> I [Ms. Smith] think that English is the greatest obstacle for [Jim] which may be the reason why he sometimes can not focus. I want him to learn to focus and be able to complete a task. I also believe that children need to be trained to focus. We have expected that the school would help him to learn to focus. However, it seems not to be feasible since the teacher needs to divide her attention to all children. . . . we want to help him to learn to focus and to be able to accomplish a task as he needs to. Therefore, we bought him a desk, two sets of English picture cards, and began to train him to focus. We do this by teaching him to associate the object on each picture with its pronunciation (YHPI, 3-2-94).

The Smiths have expressed their concern about not being well informed about Jim's progress at school. They expected to know more specific examples of how Jim was doing

in different classroom activities. They hoped that the teacher could spend more individual time with him. Ms. Smith said:

> We don't think that we are being well informed about his [Jim's] progress at school. We are sorry that we feel that way. We expect the teacher to give us more specific examples of how he is doing at school rather than give us a big broad general answer. For example, we'd like to know his performance in "the morning message" or in "journal reading." Maybe we do not talk to her as much as we should. Anyway, we feel that the teacher is fair with every child, but it would be great if she could pay more attention to him (YHPI, 3-2-94).

In summary, similarities and differences exist in the parents' and the teacher's expectations and concerns regarding Jim's English language learning. Both believe that Jim is happy; he likes school; and he has the potential to learn. In terms of differences in expectations, both the teacher and the parents have disagreements in whether the parents should use English at home and whether Jim needs individual instructional tutor at school.

What exists may be a case of cultural discontinuity, that is, a case of confusion and misinterpretation caused by a difference of expectation in the teacher and parents. For example, in the notes above, the teacher is perceived by the parents to expect a change in language at home while the parents believe that Chinese should be spoken in the home. Also, as indicated above, the parents think that Jim would be better served by tutoring whereas the teacher sees Jim's progress as continuous and to be expected using the class curriculum with minor modifications. These are cases of conflicting expectations caused by a difference in belief system.

Perhaps a key indicator of the problem illustrated here is that the parents are concerned about the seeming lack of communication by the teacher with them regarding Jim's progress in school. This perceived lack of communication, especially earlier in the year when Jim was having great difficulty with English, is illustrative of the "cultural gap" that exists between the parents and the teacher regarding Jim's English acquisition (Hsu and Casey, 1994).

However, it should be noted that the more general, perhaps higher-order expectations are virtually the same between the parents and the teacher. All are concerned that he be prepared to succeed academically when he moves on to the first grade and all perceive themselves as pursuing a path that best accomplishes this purpose. Despite the differences of belief, the parents and the teacher all share a desire to further Jim's English language development in spite of differences as to how this should be operationalized.

**Strategies**

*Ms. Jones's Strategies*

Ms. Jones has consistently used different approaches to understand Jim or to help him understand the learning materials:

> What I tried to do a lot was that if there are something he [Jim] could show me, either he gets to find it in the room, find a picture of it, show me how you do it. I will use lots of words at the beginning that he would be able to understand. . . . I probably watch the words I was saying and say it with simpler words and probably slower, simpler words and in more than one ways. I give him. . if it is a direction, I tell him the same direction in different ways, so if he didn't understand it in one direction may be he will understand in this, and I didn't assume that I knew what he was talking about, a lot of time I had other children, sometimes that will help him (YHTI, 3-8-94).

She gave one example to extend the idea of what she did to help Jim understand:

> . . . if we were talking about a letter sound or something or a letter if he was learning that letter, and it was .. he had to write a 'w' and it's around Halloween. Instead of saying 'w' like in word 'witch,' he probably wouldn't know what 'witch' was, so we always get a picture and show him the picture of a witch. Or in "wet," we can take some water and say the water is "wet," you can feel it's "wet," so that just the word that there is no indication, that he did not necessarily know what the picture was, and wagon or wheels, we'll say, o. k. like the wheels in a car, or whatever we could do to get him to understand because he knew the concept, he knows all the things that we do, he just has them in a different frame of reference. He just does them in Chinese and it wasn't the matter of so much of teaching him the things, it's just teaching that this in English is the same thing he already knew (YHTI, 3-8-94).

Another vital element that contributed to Jim's English learning is the teacher's whole language teaching philosophy and her belief in how children learn:

> I think it [whole language] made things so much easier for him, because in a whole language classrooms, things tend to make more sense. You

don't learn as many bits and pieces, you tend to learn from a whole of some things . . . . and I think that's what whole languag helps him a lot too is that we could work from what he knows, he learned some words pretty early, he likes lions, and dragons, and fish, and some other animals, and things, and so when we are working on writing, and he was working on his journal, he can always go back to the words he knew. As soon as he learned fish then we can talk about the things that fish does and we can expand from these and so we could use whatever it is he was interested or learned or could do and talked about it from these instead of having him adapt to the curriculum, the curriculum could adapt to him (YHTI, 3-24-94).

I think children learn best through being actively involved in real things. Things that make sense in the world, not things we think this is children's way. They learn best .. if you are talking about how to be social with other children then they learn best practicing things with other children and being with them, if you are talking about reading, they learn best by being involved in the process of reading, if it's writing, they learn best by being involved in the process of writing, they learn math by working with manipulatives, I think you have to be actively involved in what you are doing, and see a reason for it in life. I think you get into a problem with children not learning well with things that are very abstract, you learn the letter b, next it sounds b, well, what does that have to do with a child's life. It doesn't. And I think that kind of false learning makes it very hard for children. If they saw a reason why that b was important, their friend Bobby's name began with that sound, well, so I think children need to be involved in real things used in real ways, that's probably the most important (YHTI, 4-19-94).

I think good teaching is using all of these things in the most appropriate ways for children and adapting things to make them work for the children you have (YHTI, 4-19-94).

*The Smiths' Strategies*

To help their child to develop English language, the Smiths had used many strategies. First, they invented a method to help their child learn how to focus, using picture cards to increase his English vocabularies, and giving Jim a school desk to use at home. The parents also designed different learning games and involved Jim's brother.

We [the Smiths] bought him a desk, two sets of English picture cards, and began to train him to focus. We do this by teaching [Jim] to associate the object on each picture with its pronunciation. First we ask him in Chinese what the picture is; if he knew the answer and responded correctly, we told him the name for that picture in English. This appears to be very effective; he learned how to say each picture card in English after a few days. We also designed different games for him. The rule for working on the games or the picture cards is that he needs to sit in front of the desk and complete a task. Sometimes, we will ask Gege [Jim's older brother] to teach him. Before that, we will discuss with Gege about what might be the most effective teaching strategies to teach him. Since he always want to

> excel over his brother, the questions asked by Gege most often are "see if you can do this better than I do" or "see if you can finish this task in a shorter time." It works pretty well (YHPI, 3-2-94).

Second, the Smiths bought several books and tapes for Jim and checked out "books from his class or from the library" (YHPI, 3-30-94). They also spent much time reading with Jim: "We read to him, read with him, or ask him to read to us. We spell some words for him and encourage him to say the word as clearly as he can" (YHPI, 3-2-94).

Third, the parents have selected *Sesame Street* and several other educational programs for Jim to increase his exposure to English language.

Fourth, the interviews with the parents support that Jim's interaction with his brother is a beneficial element to accelerate his English acquisition:

> One reading strategy we [the Smiths] found to be effective is that Gege [Jim's older brother] will read one sentence in English, then [Jim] repeats the sentence in English. Then Gege will explain the sentence in Chinese (YHPI, 3-30-94).

The brother's progress in English has provided a role model for Jim. This finding supports that children may learn language more from siblings or peers rather than from their parents (Ward, 1971).

Fifth, the Sunday School class Jim attends is primarily designed to help several Chinese children to pick up English. According to the interview with the mother, the program appears to be very effective:

> They [the children] listen to Bible stories, they sing, and draw pictures. They [the teachers] teach different subjects each time; sometimes they emphasize the use of prepositions by associating pictures with appropriate prepositions. All instruction is in English. So far, my children like to go and enjoying learning English (YHPI, 3-14-94).

Finally, the parents have spent much time in helping Jim to practice writing English, mainly through coping letters:

> We [the Smiths] will write all upper case letters first, then he needs to practice writing and memorize all these letters. The first time, he copies the letters. The second time, he may peek at the letters we write for him; then he needs to try to memorize after that. Same as lower case letters. He needs to practice writing all the letters if he makes any mistakes the third time. The frequencies of practicing writing parallel the numbers of mistakes. After several practices, he can almost write all upper and lower case letters

> without peeking , except that he still confuses d/b and g/q. We also test him to see if he has remembered all the letters. We ask him to write several words in lower case only and then after that, we ask him to write several words in upper case letters. If he has difficulties in spelling, we will sound out letters for him. Sometimes, he associates certain letters with his friends' names. Since he is always careless, we help him to pay attention to the details. We work with him to point out and discuss certain letters that he thinks he writes really well. We discuss with him why those words are good and how he can write better (YHPI, 3-30-94).

The Smiths tend to encourage Jim to repeatedly practice writing and memorizing English letters; this may be because it is how they were taught to learn English.

Since Chinese is the dominant language spoken at home, Jim speaks Chinese fluently. However, to help Jim to pick up English language in a shorter time, the parents have spent much time and effort teaching Jim English. Since the Smiths do not want to confuse Jim with the two languages, Jim is not taught to read and write in Chinese. The Smiths's decision to postpone teaching Jim Chinese literacy skills is considered by the researcher as a great sacrifice to help their child develop English literacy skills. On the other hand, the parents are concerned about Jim's social and academic adjustment after their returning to Taiwan in two or three years. They have recognized that such adjustment will take time, effort, and patience. To respond to this problem, the parents plan to teach Jim to read and write Chinese as soon as Jim has graduated from the kindergarten this summer. The parents' decision of whether to stay in this country or go back to their country after their studying has obviously affected Jim's language use, both in English and Chinese.

The above examples have illustrated the different strategies used by the parents in helping their child to learn English.

*Jim's Strategies*

According to the teacher, Jim used many different methods to understand and learn English:

> . . . he [Jim] uses as many different methods he possibly can to understand what is expect of him and how to do it, so that he will watch what other children do, he will copy some of the things that they do. At this point, he is much more secure of the language, he will ask more questions that he wasn't able to do before (YHTI, 4-5-94).

The following examples illustrate several events in which Jim attempted to employ various strategies.

*Listening and observing* Interviews from parents and teachers verify that Jim has used listening and observing strategies.

> He [Jim] learns a great deal from observing other people and listening to their talk. He imitates a lot. I think this is how he learns things (YHPI, 3-30-94).

> He [Jim] waited a long time sometimes because he wanted it to be right. he did not do a whole lot of experimenting and saying it and getting it wrong, he listened and listened and watched and observed and waited till he felt that there was a good chance that he was going to be able to say what he needed to say, or to say it correctly, and I [Ms. Jones] think some of that is personality (YHTI, 3-24-94).

> So before, he [Jim] relied a whole lot on visual skills, on looking, listening wasn't that important to him because he didn't get a whole lot of information. It was very visual-oriented. Now, he's using more listening, when I give directions now, he can follow the directions a lot of times, sometimes he was not too sure, he will watches how someone else does something, he doesn't necessarily watch them just to copy it, I think he watches them to see what kind of things he has to do and then think about it and then did it on his own (YHTI, 4-5-94).

*Transferring* The teacher suspected that Jim transfers Chinese language structure and usage to English. She thinks that Jim has taken "whatever understanding he has of Chinese syntax and whatever understanding he has in English syntax to make some thing that works" (YHTI, 3-24,94). The child's transferring strategy is verified by the parents:

> Sometimes we [the Smiths] need to interpret his English from Chinese, then we know what he meant in English. For example, he always says "This house is everybody's." We understand that he meant "This house belongs to all of us." We think that his spoken English is greatly influenced by his oral Chinese usage (YHPI, 3-30-94).

Ellis (1986) recommends careful analysis of language transfer, as it indicates how second language learners construct their own rules and how these rules differ between the two languages. In this study, the researcher's interview and observational notes have documented that Jim frequently transfer Chinese grammar or usage into English. For example, Jim would say to his brother "don't quiet, tell mother!" which is typical Chinese structure. What he was trying to say was: if you don't be quiet, I'm going to tell mommy.

*Code-switching* Jim consistently talks to the researcher in his native language since he understands that the researcher is able to speak his language. Every time he saw the researcher walk into the classroom he immediately switched to his native language and said "There you are again." On the other hand, the teacher also found it consistent that Jim only talked to other children and adults in English. According to Johnson (1988), code-switching is used by bilinguals or multilinguals as essential communicative strategies with clear functions.

Through interviews with the teacher, the parents, and from the classroom observations, it has become evident that Jim learned English through non-verbal communication, observing, listening, coping, code-switching, and transferring. He also learns from authority figures such as teachers and his parents: "I [Ms. Jones] think he [Jim] uses his parents as resources to kind of bridge what he learns here with what he knows of the language" (YHTI, 4-5-94).

The child's attempts in using various strategies in learning a second language are consistent with the research literature in this area (Ellis, 1986; Huang & Hatch, 1978; Kachru, 1978; Mills, 1993; Wong Fillmore, 1976).

**Jim's English Literacy Skills**

In answering the question of how teacher's and parents' expectations and concerns and the stratgies they use are related to Jim's English language acquisition, it is helpful to discuss Jim's English proficiency in particular areas of English usage. To answer this question, we looked at Jim's current English ability.

*English Speaking and Listening*

Analysis of interview and observation notes revealed that Jim's speaking is considered his weakest ability by Ms. Jones and the Smiths. Ms. Jones found herself constantly guessing what does Jim is trying to say. The Smiths feel that most of Jim's oral sentences are not correct, and "full of mistakes." This may be due to several reasons: first,

the Smiths are not able to help or contribute much of their effort due to their limited English ability and the fact that they do not feel comfortable speaking English. They feel hesitant to correct their child's incorrect pronunciation because they do not know how. Second, even though Jim is exposed to the English speaking environment for seven hours per day, it is still not easy for him to distinguish and learn all different sounds in English. The Smiths have suggested that Ms. Jones would speak slower to Jim, at a level that he could understand and also, ask him to watch her lips while she talked. Third, the differences between the Chinese and the English have caused the difficulties. According to Johns (1979), Chinese people have difficulty distinguishing "r" and "l" sounds and blend-in consonants because these sounds simply do not exist in the Chinese language.

*English Reading*

At the beginning of the study, Jim was able to pick up several words in a book which he recognized and was able to read. However, during this time, he mainly looked at the pictures and sought pictorial clues to understand the text. Throughout the process of acquiring English, the parents continuously and greatly supported his English reading. They borrowed books from the class and the library and read to him. Toward the end of the study, Jim started to show his attempt to read several books by himself. During several home visits toward the end of the semester, he showed tremendous enthusiasm and interest in reading several English books. Jim would ask me to read books with him. He usually picked the books. Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham* is his favorite. He almost read the whole book by himself with only very little assistance from me. Whenever he got to a point that he was not sure how to say the word, he would try very hard to sound out the word several times. If he still could not pronounce it he would ask me in Chinese "how do you say this word," then he went on.

*English Writing*

Jim's English writing is considered the best in his overall English proficiency:

> That [Jim's English writing] I think is almost the best of all of it because it is so much easier to know what your have in your own head and write it down than to just look at these marks someone else wrote down and try to figure out the meaning, so he's writing is coming along quicker than his reading (YHTI, 4-19-94).

Ms. Jones and the Smiths's effort in helping Jim in English writing has contributed much in Jim's progress in English writing, even though they help Jim in different ways. The Smiths focus on handwriting, coping letters, and the differentiation of upper and lower case letters; whereas Ms. Jones encourages invented spelling, journal writing, and everyday writing experiences. Jim has plenty opportunities to write for various purposes everyday. Ms. Jones said:

> It just doesn't bother me in his [Jim's] writing, you [the researcher] know, sometimes if he does not have the exact right structure, he still has the ideas, and the thought, and the ability to write it down, he's learned his sounds, he's learned his words, he can read lots of sight words, he can sound words out . . . (YHTI, 3-24-94).

Language learning is a developmental process, even though Jim had gone through a long process in acquiring English, it is not until almost the end of the school year that he started to show tremendous enthusiasm and interest in engaging reading and writing English. His writing samples (see Appendix D) collected at the end of the semester clearly documented his attempts to invent spelling and his understanding in English regarding the directionality, upper and lower case letters, spaces between the words, and the punctuation marks. He wrote from left to right, top to bottom; he was able to distinguish from lower and upper case letters; the space between each word becomes more and more consistent; and occasionally, he would remember to put a period at the end of a sentence.

Jim's attempts to read and write English reflect the teacher's teaching philosophy in that children were encouraged and engaged in activities that "make sense to them." In regard to his overall English proficiency Ms. Jones affirmed that Jim had displayed several emergent literacy practices:

> . . . he [Jim] can tell us what he's doing, he can write words, he can use invented spelling, he can find and locate words in the room, he can read sentences, he participates in the morning messages now, he can guess his

words, he can fill in the blanks, he can do all of the emergent literacy things that the other children in the room do at the level that is appropriate for where he's at (YHTI, 4-5-94).

I feel that at this point to the year, [Jim] is reading and writing English, his writing in English is getting better and better, what's holding him back sometimes are the concept of the ... the structure of the language and that's a long term acquisition thing. So his writing, he has the syntax to say that this is a rocket or the rocket is going to hit, and he wrote things like the rocket is going to fire, what he meant was the rocket was going to catch on fire, and that understanding of how the English language is put together, the syntax of the language, was something that's really complicated . . . (YHTI, 3-24-94).

I think he still understands more than he uses, I think, that his receptive language is better than his speaking. I think he can get by in English with everything he has to, in terms of basic wants, basic needs, basic information, basic friends, he can get by understanding and get by speaking, I think, right now, it's a point of refining it, so you know your nouns, what things are, now you learn your adjective to describe it, then you understand, you know the word "happy," so you learn all the other words that mean "happy," or you start to take basic information you have and branch out from that, but at this point, I think he has a basic understanding of following directions, of following rules of what to do, how to do it, and how to get by (YHTI, 4-19-94).

## Discussion

Based on Jim's writing samples and his performance in English literacy activities in the school and at home, we believe that with the teacher's providing authentic reading and writing experiences and her belief in how children learn, and with the parents' value of the English language and effort in supporting it, Jim will continuously make progress in acquiring English. Most of all, he will develop joy and positive attitudes in reading and writing English, his second language, and become a lifelong reader and writer. The study findings support the theory of sociocultural framework and the theoretical assumptions that children learn a second language through many authentic, purposeful, and meaningful language experiences, and that children's understanding and use of a second language are

influenced by their unique cultural characteristics and through various social interaction with significant others surrounding them.

## Bias

As conscientious researcher, I feel that I need to address some of what I feel is my personal biases in the implementation of this study. I must confess that in my role in researching this topic, I tended to primarily observe subjects of my own culture. I found that I was agreeing with the same-culture subject in interviews resulting in a loss of critical perspective in questioning. Frequent debriefings and careful relating of conclusions to data were used to counter this bias. I utilized my ability to communicate with the subjects in their native languages to gain more in-depth information and, hopefully, achieved a greater depth of information through this process.

## Limitations

### *Time*

Time is one limitation for this kind of study. Since the teacher's and the parents' expectations may change in a longer time frame and because children's language acquisition is such a complicated phenomenon. A longer time in the field is recommended to capture any chahge in the children's language acquisition process.

### *Generalization*

Since this study was based on interviews and observations of one Taiwanese child [Jim] , Jim's school teacher, and his parents, generalizations could not be made about other Chinese children populations or children who speak English as a second language. However, the findings of the study support theoretical disposition of this study.

## Recommendations

A follow-up, longitudinal study may provide a full picture of this kind of study. Researchers may also study a matched subject in Taiwan as a follow up to examine whether

it is the socio-cultural influences or the instructional methods that have affected children's English language acquisition and development.

**Implications**

The implications of this study are subtle but, in my opinion, very real. This case illustrates what is often a common problem in the educational setting when families of an outside culture socially integrate the school. There is a certain amount of cultural discontinuity which often leads to misunderstandings early in the process. In this study, the teacher and the parents held ideas and beliefs that were dissonant to one another.

However, as the year proceeded, Jim's English ability improved, he started to bring home what he had learned from school, the differences began to fade. The parents and the teacher became increasingly satisfied with Jim's progress as his language improved.

As we can see from this study, the two cultural groups actually have the same goals-- to facilitate Jim's English language development, they just approach these goals differently. For example, the teacher suspected that Jim's English language development was being impeded by the speaking of his native language at home, without knowing the reasons behind it, and the amount or work and effort and the huge sacrifices the parents had done (postpone the teaching of Chinese literacy skills). Also, the parents did not understand why the school did not correct Jim's English spelling, without understanding that invented spelling is a natural process and appropriate stage in learning English and it is encouraged in whole language classrooms.

In a multicultural educational setting, it is recommended that a clear and direct communication about the educational goals and progress between parents and teachers at the beginning of the process would serve to eliminate or reduce the misunderstanding and miscommunication present in this situation and better serve Jim's English language development. The parents would have been more satisfied if there had been more initial communication about Jim's progress, specifically that his problems were to be expected.

Also, the parents perceived the teacher's comments regarding home language use to be suggestive of a language change in the home. Perhaps a little more direct dialog on this issue would have eased the initial problem in this area. Likewise, this dialog could serve to inform the teacher of what activities and sacrifices the family is making and eliminate the notion that English is not supported in the home.

Another implication of this study is the teacher's whole language teaching philosophy in equipping children develop emerging English literacy skills. This study supports the sociocultural framework and the theoretical disposition that to develop lifelong readers and writers, the daily authentic, meaningful reading and writing experiences and the motivators to interact with significant others are essential in meeting individual children's developmental needs.

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## Appendix A

Parent Consent Form

I agree to participate in, and agree to have my child participate in, a study of second language learning, conducted by Yuehkuei Hsu and Jason Casey (graduate students of education at Memphis State University.) I understand that:

(1) the purpose of the study is to observe and describe how Asian children learn English literacy skills in America;

(2) my child will be observed at school and at home as he/she interacts with adults and/or other children;

(3) home visits will be scheduled at my convenience;

(4) both my child and I will be interviewed occasionally; these interviews will be audio-tape recorded;

(5) the audio tapes will be reviewed and analyzed only by the researchers and will not be presented in the public;

(6) none of my family members' actual names will be identified;

(7) all data will be kept confidential and all data will be used for research purpose only.

Child's name _____

Parent's signature _____

Investigator's signature _____

Today's date _____

## Appendix B

The Researcher's Work Schedule

YH Yuehkuei Hsu
SO School observation
HO Home observation
TI Teacher interview
PI Parent interview
CI Child interview

| Dates | YHSO | YHHO | YHTI | YHPI | YHCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-17-94 | x | | | | |
| 1-26-94 | | x | | | |
| 2-2-94 | x | | | | |
| 2-9-94 | | x | | | |
| 2-23-94 | | x | | | |
| 2-26-94 | x | | | | |
| 3-2-94 | | x | | x | |
| 3-3-94 | x | | | | |
| 3-4-94 | | | | | x |
| 3-8-94 | | | x | | |
| 3-14-94 | | x | | x | |
| 3-15-94 | x | | | | |
| 3-24-94 | | | x | | |
| 3-30-94 | x | x | | x | |
| 3-31-94 | | | | | x |
| 4-5-94 | | | x | | |
| 4-15-94 | x | x | | x | |
| 4-19-94 | | | x | | |
| 4-27-94 | | x | | x | |
| 5-4-94 | x | | x | | |
| 5-6-94 | | | x | | |

## Appendix C

Figure 1. Teacher interview questions

*A. Broad and Open-ended Questions*

1. I am curious about how Jim adjusted to school since he knew no English when he first came to this country.

2. In your opinion, how is American culture different from Chinese culture?

3 Have you experienced any differences in your expectations of Jim's and the parents' expectations of Jim?

4. Have you ever found it difficult to communicate with Jim?

5. What do you do to try to understand Jim?

6. How do you think that he benefited from a whole language classroom?

7. How do you look at whole language and emergent literacy?

8. How do you encourage Jim's parents to assist him in the process of learning English?

9. How long has Jim been in America?

10. How has Jim progressed in school?

11. Have you had any other Chinese or Asian children in your classes?

12. How would you compare Jim's progress to that of his classmates? Are they following similar patterns?

13. In relation to last August, how [good] would you say that his [Jim's] abilities are now to use English in doing the assignments?

14. Do you try to do anything special to draw Jim out?

15. Are you trying to make sure Jim gets all of the things the other kids get?

16. Sometimes I see Jim unable to do something and assume that it is because he either can not or does not understand. Are there things we think he can not do for lack of language but is actually a naturally occurring misunderstanding that all of the children are susceptible to?

*B. More Structured Questions*

1. Have you noticed that sometimes Jim might be reluctant to show you or tell you something because he was not sure whether he was right?
2. Did you find Jim's use both Chinese and English in the classroom?
3. Could you give one example of trying to tell him in different ways?
4. Have you talked to Jim's parents and see what kind or prior school experience he had?
5. Are there things you might suggest I watch that you observe Jim having difficulty with?
6. So you're observing more socialization with the others and more misbehavior?

Figure 2. Parents Interview Questions

*A. Broad and open-ended questions*

1. I am curious about how Jim's adjusted to school since he knew no English when he first came to the United States.

2. What is your expectation from school? Do you feel that you are informed well enough to know about Jim from teachers and the school?

3. How do you assist Jim in learning English?

4. What do you think of the school?

5. In your opinion, how is American culture different from Chinese

6. What is your impression of the school your child is attending? How does it compare to that in Taiwan?

7. How much does Jim understand English?

8. What do you think are the factors influencing Jim's English learning?

9. What is your response when your child has done something well? How do you praise them?

10. What are Jim's attitudes toward learning English and Chinese?

11. Are there any suggestions you want to give to school regarding Jim's learning?

12. How do you generally reward and punish your children?

13. How would you describe your child's learning styles?

14. How concerned are you about the social and academic adjustment of your children when they return to Taiwan?

*B. More Structured Questions*

1. Does Jim increase his English usage at home since he has become more familiar with the English language?
2. Does Jim mix Chinese and English together?
3. In what occasions will Jim speak English?
4. Did he transfer Chinese grammar into English?

## Appendix D

**Key to classroom map**

B = Bookcase

C = Cabinet

M = Mailslots

S = Sink

T = Table

**Key to bedroom map**

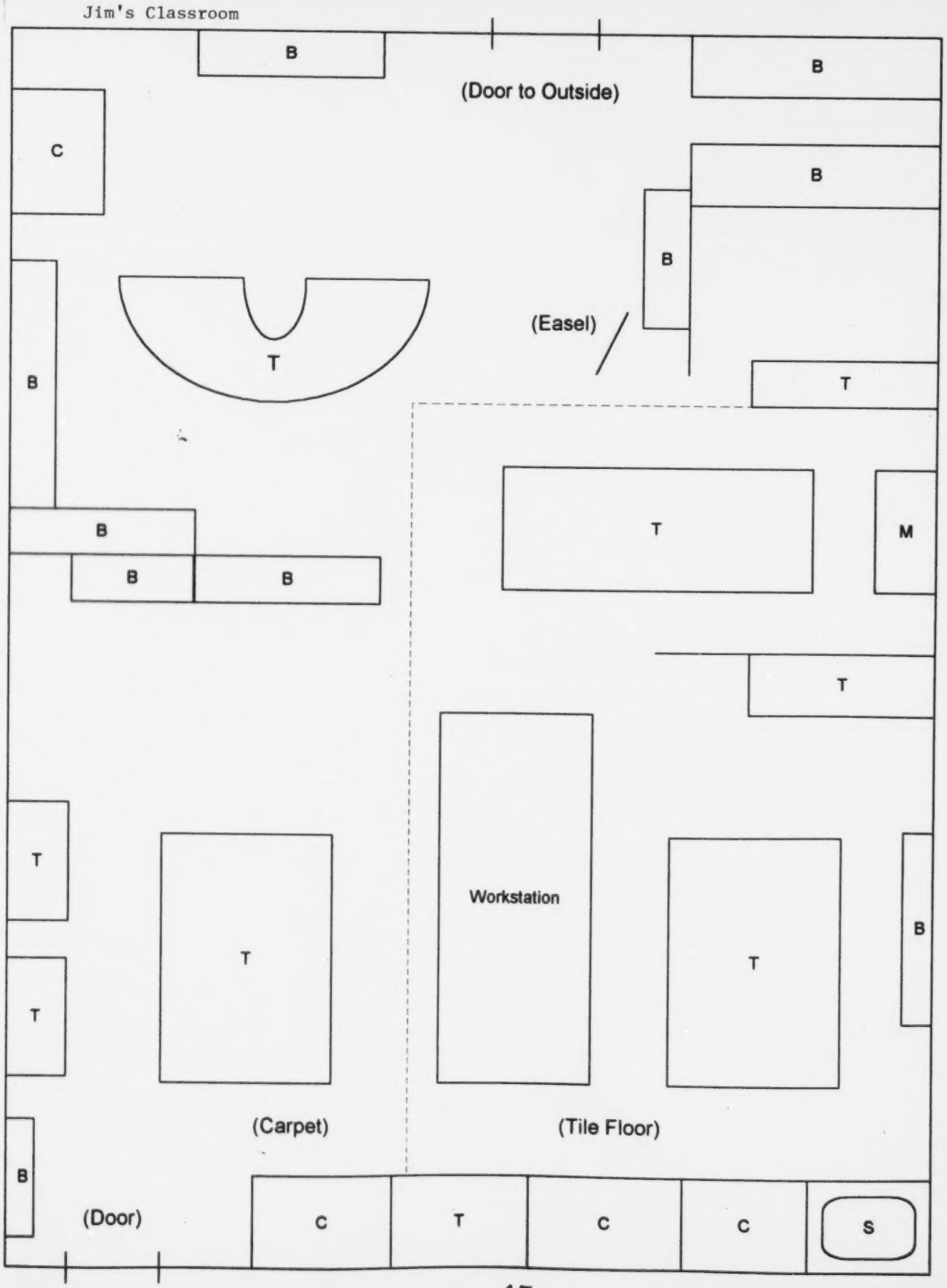
B1 = Bed

B2 = Bookcase

S = Shelf

T1 = Table

T2 = Toybox


Jim's Classroom
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B
(Door to Outside)
C
B
B
(Easel)
T
T
B
B
B
B
T
M
T
T
Workstation
T
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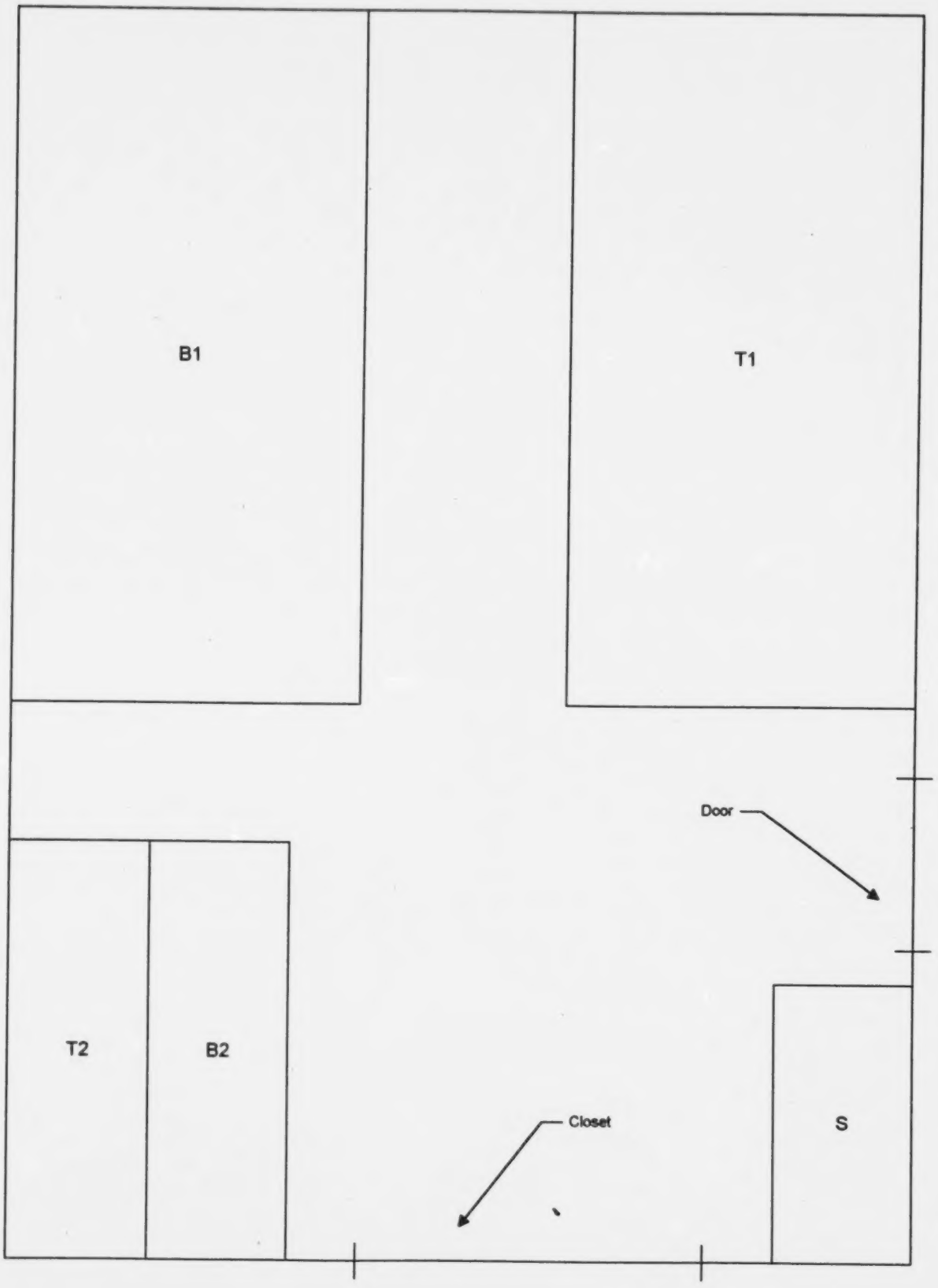
T
B
(Carpet)
(Tile Floor)
B
(Door)
C
T
C
C
S

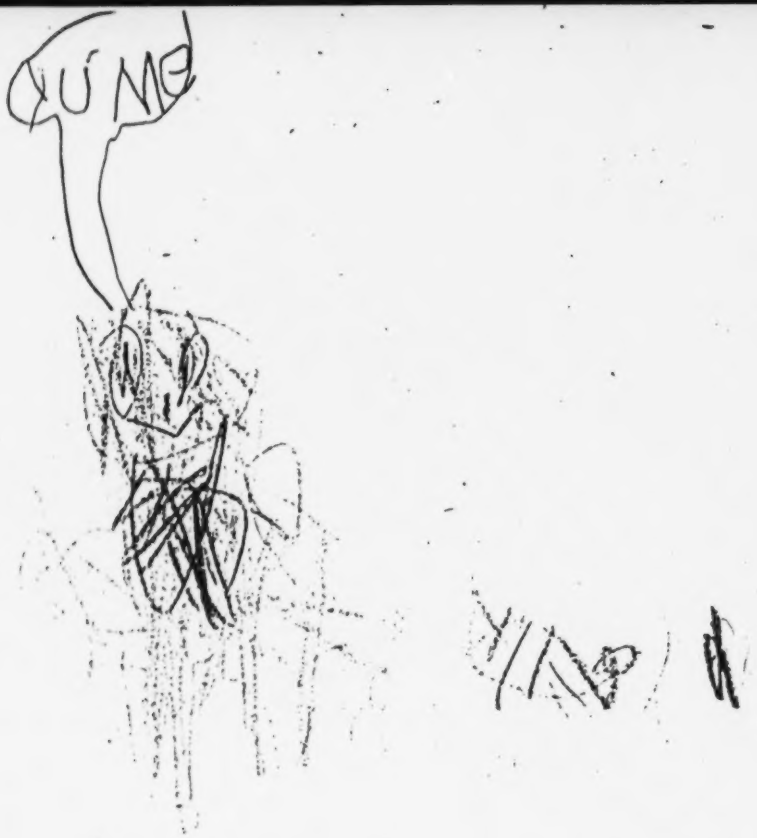
Jim's Bedroom



## Appendix E

Jim's writing samples.

Note: Some sections omitted from samples to protect Jim's anonymity



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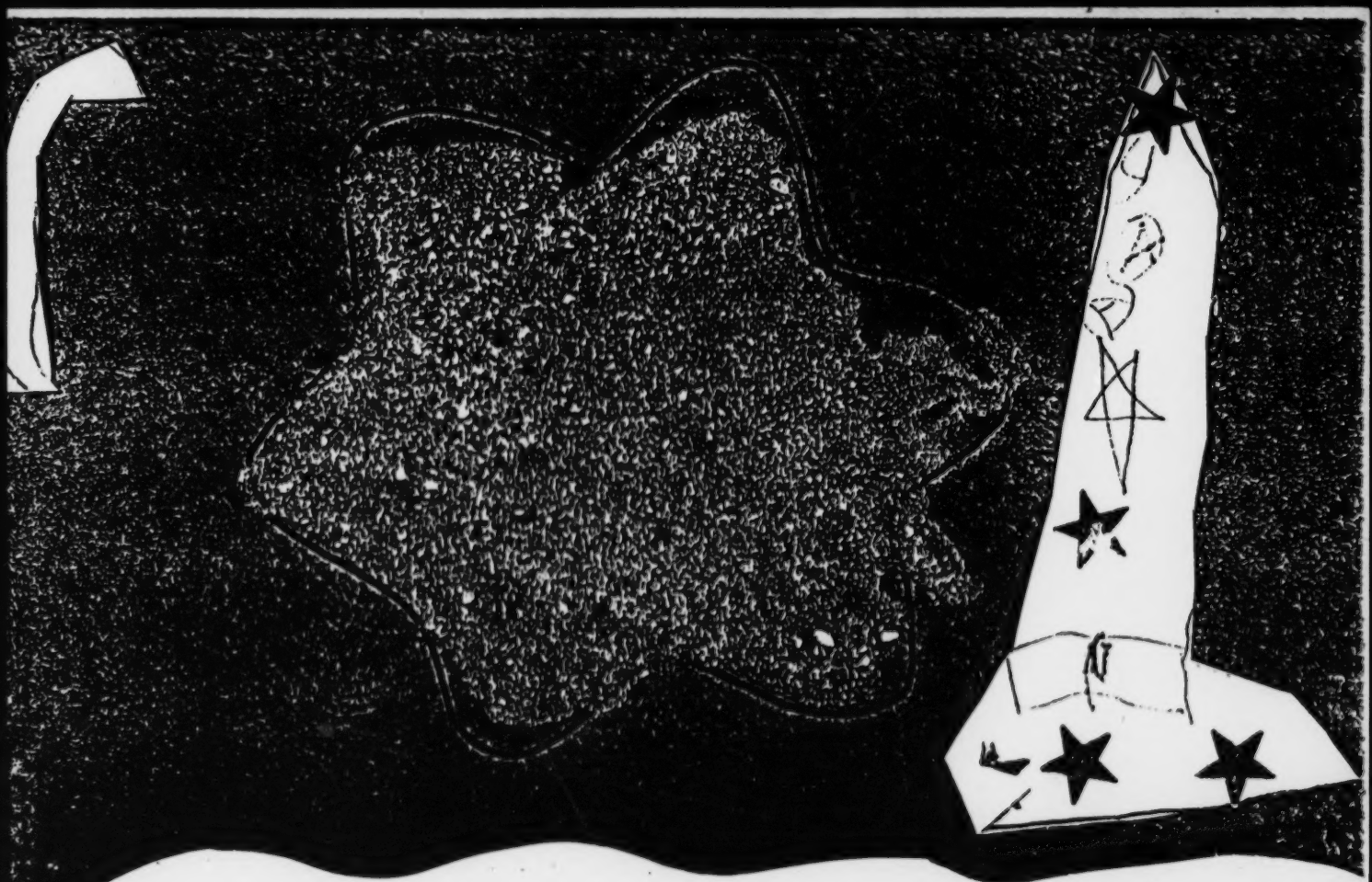

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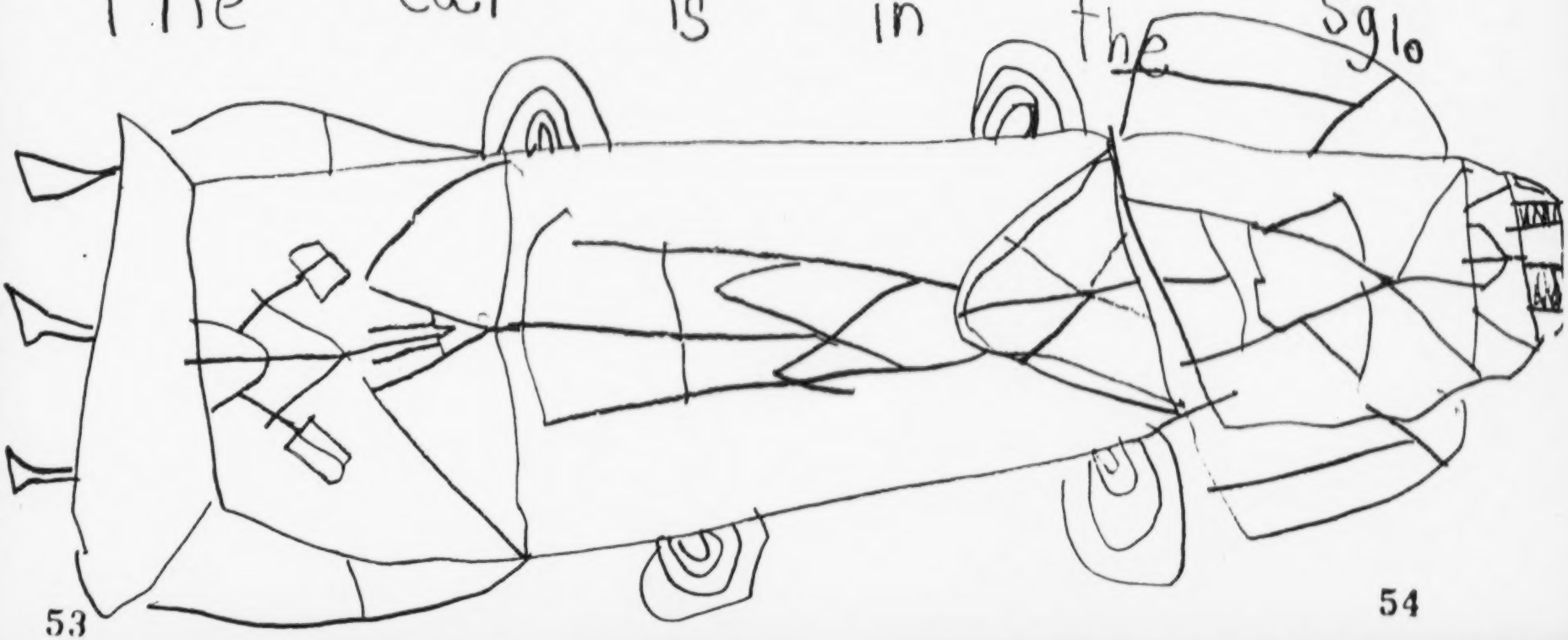

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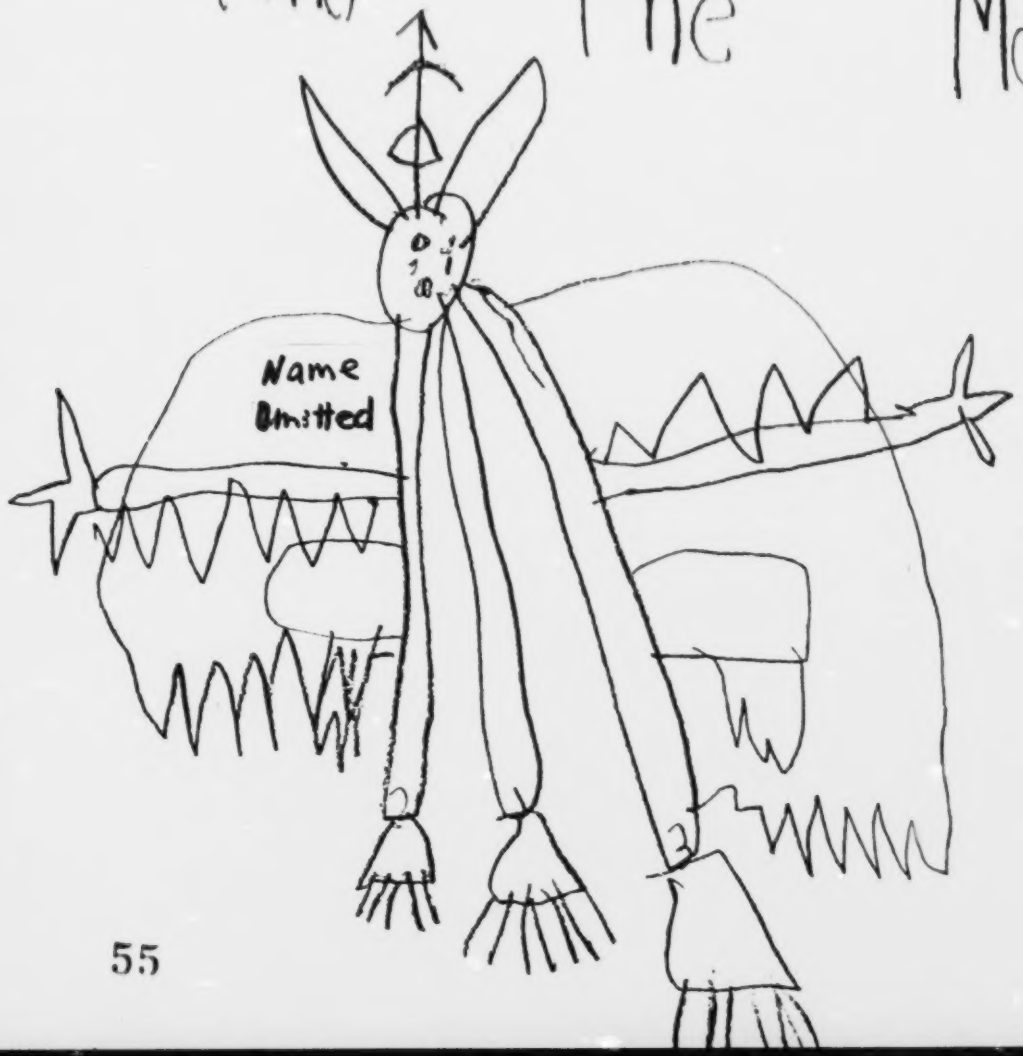

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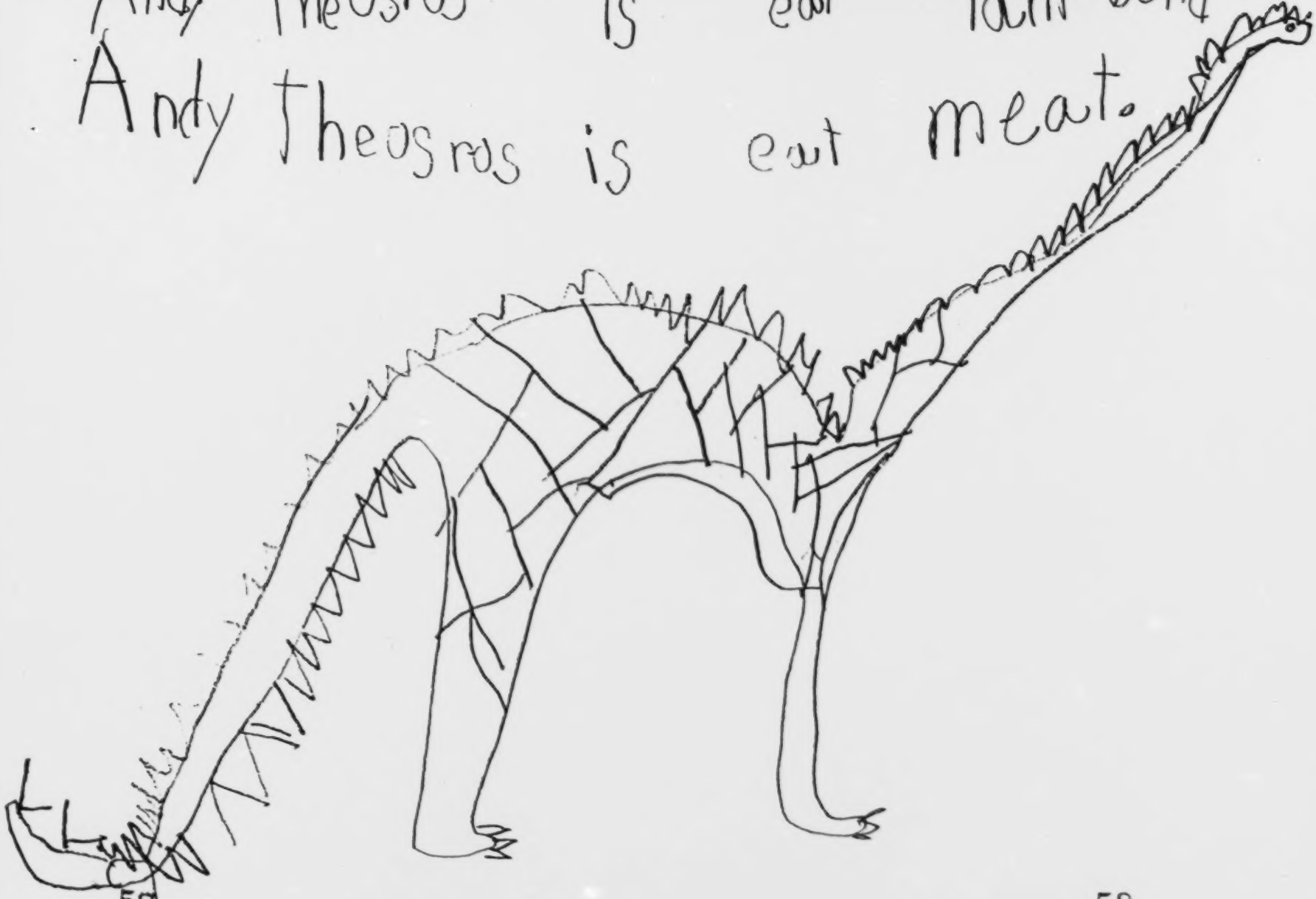
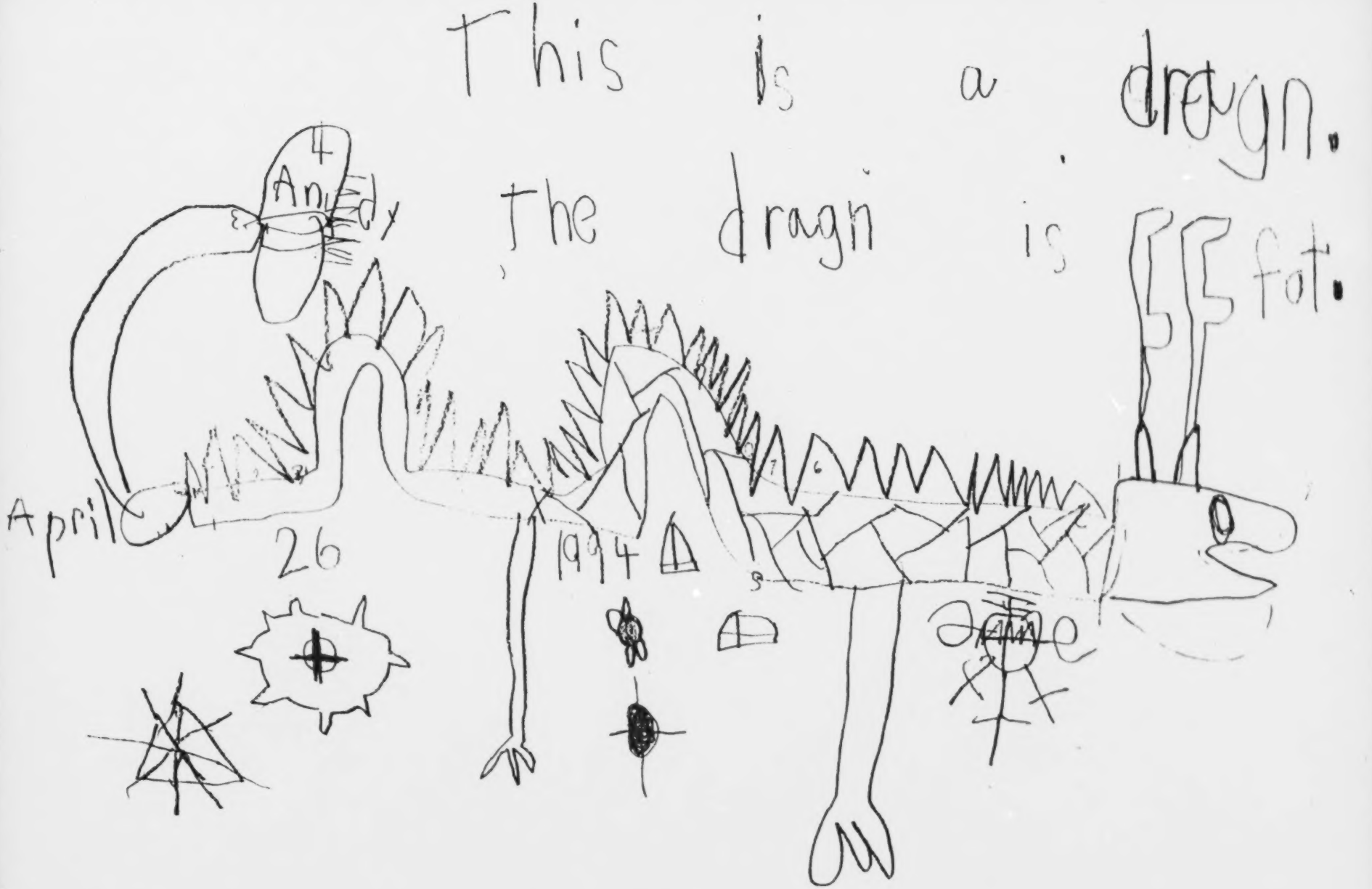




58



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